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II.—VEDIOVIS, THE VOLCANIC GOD.

A RECONSTRUCTION.

In the interesting summary of the geological evolution of the Roman province in Abbate, Guida della prov. di Roma, pp. 74-175, a description is given of the Volsinian, Ciminian, Sabatine, Latin, Hernician and other volcanic craters of the province. Soracte was the first mountain to emerge and is non-volcanic. Then came the limestone subsidiary ranges, the Praenestini, Lepini, Simbruini, Sabini. Another upheaval brought up the main Apennine ossature linked with the above mainly by the hills of Frusino, Ferentinum and Anagnia. With the Quaternary period came the emergence of the sub-soil of the Roman Campagna and its hills after sub-aqueous volcanic convulsions. The great aerial volcanic eruptions that followed began apparently in the Hernician hills and then concentrated at the Alban crater and were accompanied by great diluvial action. Even before the subsidence of these violent conditions at the close of the Quaternary period, the presence of man on the mountains is proved. Soon after, man came down to the region of the Alban hills and the new coast line, but the active action of the Alban crater did not cease until some time after all other craters north of Campania had become extinct and the only signs of the tremendous activity in the region of Viterbo were its mineral springs such as the famous sulphur pond of *Bulicame*.

It is generally conceded that the primitive Romans, as well as their ancestors and other Italic tribes worshipped deities that embodied the important functions and operations of nature, of which man had either hopes or fears. These deities were not anthropomorphic and anecdotic, like Greek deities, but rather the impersonal essences of these natural forces. It would therefore have been extraordinary if there had not been, among these functional impersonations, a representative of volcanic action in its various forms.

Even a superficial student of the geological history of Rome and Latium is aware of the important rôle that must

have been played by volcanic action during the formative stage of this religion especially at and near Alba, the mother-city of Rome.¹ At that period it was certainly the most violent, obvious and destructive of the natural forces against which the people sought to protect themselves by their more or less magic ritual. Not only was a large part of the Latin territory subject to the effects of the eruptions of the Alban crater, but the volcanic formation on which the people lived still teemed,² even in historic times, with hot springs like the Lautolae in the Forum, or with crevasses like the Tarentum in the Campus, or the Curtian lake (Livy, VII 6, 1), all of which were as much due to the latent activity of the volcanic god as the ashes, lava or lapilli were due to his virulent action, of which Livy still chronicles a number of instances until quite a late period.³ Even the unusual eruption of the Alban crater to which the formation of Monte Cavo was due, when the stream of lava is supposed to have flowed quite a distance toward Rome, seems to have taken place after the founding of the earliest settlements on the Roman hills because the cinerary urns of the Alban necropolis found under the lava belong roughly to the same archaeological period as the tombs in the early necropolis of the Roman forum.⁴

¹ The volcanic region is summarized by Pais (*Stor. crit. di Roma* I 701): "la vasta plaga che dall' Amiata si stende ai monti di Bolsena, al Cimino, ai colli Albani, alla montagna di Rocca Monfina e in fine al Vesuvio".

² Pais (*loc. cit.*) has an inkling of the truth when, after saying that the great volcanic eruptions had long ceased when the first settlements were founded, he says that their influence remained and that the sulphurous and mephitic emanations of the volcanic area and the numerous thermal springs existing from Viterbo to Rome determined certain fearsome religious rites like that of Soranus, worshipped by the Hirpini on Mt. Soracte, and perhaps also that of Vediovis among the Latins. My paper was written, in its present form, as long ago as December, 1912, and I did not see this suggestion of Pais until July, 1913. In any case Pais did not follow up his suggestion. On the contrary, he states that he accepts the Wissowa theory (p. 701), while elsewhere he actually adopts Preller's asylum theory (I 588).

³ Livy, I 31. 2; VII 28. 7; cf. III 10; XXI 62. 5; XXIII 31. 15; XXV 77; XXVI 23; XXXV 9; etc.

⁴ For a bibliography of the necropolis consult Kiepert-Hülsen, *Formae Urbis*. See esp. Not. Scavi, Bull. Com. and Röm. Mittheil. for 1902 and 1903, etc.

We should, then, expect to find among the original *di indigetes* of Rome, among the *di inferi*, a volcanic god : but we do not find such a god. At least, he has not been identified. We need not discuss the philologically tempting Vulcanus. With the Etruscans he was one of the Thunder-and-Lightning-gods. He was among the *di indigetes* of Rome and had his special flamen, and he represented the element of fire. But it was the fire kindled above the earth's surface. He was invoked against incendiary fires ; was, in later times, the god of firemen. He was, for instance, worshipped at Perugia after the partial burning of the city by the army of the young Augustus on its capture in the civil war of 41 B. C. His cult was given particular prominence at Ostia where protection of the warehouses against fire was all-important. Vulcanus was, in fact, a sort of personified Fire Insurance Company to whom the Romans paid regular dues. But, he had nothing to do with elemental subterranean fires.

Yet, the real volcanic god has, during all these centuries, been at our hand, waiting to be recognized, his real character forgotten ever since the time when the cessation of any reminiscent fear of danger from volcanic action combined with the growth of scepticism had made the Romans of the late Republic forget his real character, though, with their usual tenacity, they held on to the husk of his cult.

The name of this god is Vediovis. It is variously spelled Vediovis, Veiovis or Veditus. When the Roman antiquarians of the age of Cicero and Augustus began to study the past, his origin and characteristics had been so completely befogged that they and their successors have told us practically nothing about him. Modern critics confess themselves puzzled or quite thwarted. Preller's old conjecture (I 262) that Vediovis was the patron god of criminals, based on the position of one of his temples *inter duos lucos* on the Capitol, where legend placed the primitive Asylum for criminals, is too fantastic to be seriously considered. Fowler¹ says : " We have but his name to go upon, and two or three "indistinct traces of his cult", and he adds that he must "give up the attempt to discover the original nature of this god". Wis-sowa,² who shares with Mr. Fowler the primacy in matters of

¹ Roman Festivals, p. 121.

² Religion u. Kultus d. Römer², p. 236 sqq.

Roman religion, is a little more definite. He believes that we can at least assert two things of Vediovis: (1) that he was an infernal deity and (2) that he was, as his name indicates, the counterpart or opposite of Jupiter. He supports this with the early Roman formula of *devotio* or ritual sacrifice *pro bono publico* cited by Macrobius, in which Vediovis is associated with the spirits of the dead, the *di manes*, in much the same way that Jupiter is associated with the guardians of the living, the *di penates*. He adds the evidence of late writers who connect or identify Vediovis with Dis Pater and Pluto and make him lord of the underworld at a time previous to the complete dominance of Hellenic ideas. Another suggestion has been contributed by the historian of ancient divination, Bouché-Leclercq.¹ Referring to the table of gods distributed in the sixteen sections of the heavenly templum in the chart of Martianus Capella, according to the system of Etruscan divination by thunder and lightning, he points to the fact that the name of Vediovis appears in the fifteenth of these sections of the heavens and that he must therefore have some connection with thunder and lightning, though he is puzzled to see how this is possible.

A few Roman writers had also indulged in conjectures. Ovid² and Festus³ introduced a needlessly confusing element. They interpreted Vediovis to be the Youth-Jupiter, very much as the god of the shrine at Anxur was the Child-Jupiter. This was based merely on the diminutive aspect of the prefix particle *ve*: thus VE(D)iovis = Little Jupiter. This conjecture has been very properly relegated to the waste-paper basket. The two other meanings of the prefix *ve* have also been used as a basis of interpretations: the privative and the excessive or malignant and unregulated. The theory of Gellius⁴ was that the force of *ve* was privative; and that there was in Vediovis the absence of all the positive excellencies of Jove. But Fowler is undoubtedly right in saying that we cannot evolve out of Jupiter merely by subtraction any distinct deity who should be a sinister opposite to Jupiter.

¹ Histoire de la divination antique, IV p. 36.

² Fasti, III 437-448.

³ Paulus, p. 379.

⁴ N. A. V 12.

Therefore, in looking to the name as an index of character it would seem as if we must turn to the third idea inherent in the *ve*, the idea of unbridled violence, of undisciplined force, such as is exemplified in *vesanus* as opposed to *sanus*.

Whatever relation there was to Jupiter must therefore have involved not primitive identity but primitive distinction and opposition, though on the same plane. As Diovis ruled heaven, so Vediovis may have ruled a not-heaven. As Diovis personified order and judgment, so Vediovis may have personified disorder and dementia. As Diovis caused and ruled the heavenly thunder and lightning, so Vediovis caused the subterranean thunder and lightning. We will see later how much corroboration there is for this interpretation.

Aside from these conjectures of Ovid, Festus and Gellius, based on the name alone, what are the stray hints that have reached us from Roman times and that must be the basis of any interpretation?

(1) Inscription of the late Republic of the Gens Iulia at Bovillae on altar to Vediovis.

(2) Mention in the primitive calendar of an *agonium*, apparently in honor of Vediovis.

(3) Varro's statement that Vediovis was a Sabine god introduced into primitive Rome.

(4) Early formula of *devotio* associating Vediovis with the *di manes*: and reference to ancient rituals with mention of Vediovis in Gellius.

(5) Mention of two temples of Vediovis in Rome and appearance of his name three times in the calendar.

(6) Appearance of Vediovis among the gods in the Etruscan scheme for divination by thunder and lightning as given by Martianus Capella.

(7) Description of a statue of Vediovis in his Capitoline temple in Ovid and Gellius.

(8) Sacrifice of a goat to Vediovis, *ritu humano*, reported by Gellius.

(9) Reference to the *Fulmen Veiovis*(?) in Ammianus Marcellinus.

(10) Connection between Dis Pater and Vediovis in Martianus Capella.

(11) Connection between Apollo and Vediovis in Gellius.

I will now analyze this material, beginning with the inscription at Bovillae, which is the only record of Vediovis that has been found outside of Rome and the only inscription to him.

This inscription was on an altar found at Bovillae. Gell¹ gives a drawing of the altar and describes it as of rough peperino and says that it 'has since perished'. Its lines, with the pinched neck above the base are quite early. They are almost exactly paralleled at the latest in an altar of the year 9 B. C. with archaic outlines now in the museum of the Antiquarium Comunale at Rome, illustrated by Pais;² by a still earlier one dedicated 151 B. C. to the god Verminus, in the same museum; and, much earlier by the tufa altar of the Black Stone which is usually ascribed to the fifth century B. C. or earlier. It was evidently the usual form down to the close of the Republic. The inscription CIL. I 807 reads, in two sections:

VEDIOVEI PATREI GENTEILES IVLIEI

VED[IOVEI IV]L[E]I[A]ARA LEEGE ALBANA DICATA

The altar was dedicated by the Iulian Gens, and the inscription seems to be the only known dedication to Vediovis. Its early date, perhaps the second century B. C., and its context, give it greater value as a document than anything else, not even excepting the testimony of the calendar and the description of the statue. The three cardinal points are: the name *Pater* given to Vediovis; the fact that the altar was dedicated according to a certain special ritual, the *lex Albana*; and thirdly the bearing of the site itself where the altar was found upon the character of the god.

The qualification of the god as *Vediovis Pater* is indicative of two things: of the primitive and also of the important character of his cult. Mars Pater, Janus Pater, Quirinus Pater, Saturnus Pater, Liber Pater, Neptunus Pater, Terra Mater, Mater Matuta, Dis Pater are other deities to receive this sort of surname and they belong to the foremost and earliest of the Roman gods. Also this is one of a very small class of inscriptions in which a Roman gens declares its adoption of a patron god.

¹ Topography of Rome, etc., p. 123.

² Ancient legends, p. 166: cf. Helbig, Führer² I pp. 595-596.

The second point, the use of the Lex Albana in the dedication of the *ara*, is not only a most unusual circumstance, but one which in this case is fundamental. It indicates that the cult of Vediovis was centered at and derived from Alba, and that the regulations that governed it were formulated in a specific Alban ritual. It will be evident why this was so as soon as we admit the volcanic connection of Vediovis. Let this be admitted before it is proved, for the sake of argument. Given the fact that the Alban crater was the centre of volcanic action in this region previous to the iron age; given also the fact that around it has been found archaeological material that connects the Albans with the prehistoric *terramare* and that is earlier than any yet found in this part of Italy,¹ it follows that the cult of the volcanic god would naturally originate and centre at Alba.

Further, as Bovillae was only about three miles distant and so was directly within the danger zone, an altar to a volcanic god would be particularly appropriate here. It would also be natural that the volcanic cult should linger here at its centre long after it had lost all significance in Rome itself.

The presence of Vediovis on the calendar² is important, but rather difficult to use in any definite manner except as showing the primitive character of the cult and its place in the festivals of the whole people. The primitive calendar of Numa contains the mention of an *agonium* on May 21, a date connected with Vediovis. There seems no absolute certainty as to the original nature of an *agonium* except that it was a festival of the whole people and of the most primitive period, with which the earliest of the priestly authorities, the *rex sacrorum*, was connected. The juxtaposition of the *agonium* of May 21 with Vediovis is a further indication that his cult antedated the Republic and that he ranks with the *di indigetes*. Two other calendar days are marked as his festivals in later redactions of the calendar, each of them in connection with

¹ See, for a good summary of this question, Modestov, *Introd. à l'histoire romaine*, passim. Important material bearing on this connection and but little known existed in the Museo Kircheriano at Rome, and has recently been, I believe, moved to the Etruscan Museum at Villa Giulia.

² Fowler, *Roman Festivals*, 121-122, 277-278. Wissowa, loc. cit.

one of his two temples. On March 7 there was a ceremony at his temple on the Capitol *inter duos lucos*; and on January 1 was the anniversary celebration of the dedication of his temple on the Island.

Is it allowable to infer that the existence of two temples was made necessary by the change in the pomerium? The primitive shrine of the god *inter duos lucos* was originally, according to a theory with which I heartily agree, outside the pomerium, as we should naturally expect in the case of one of the *di inferi*. Fowler regards the sign of the god Terminus that was the only emblem not removed from the lower spur of the Capitol to make way for Jupiter O. M., to have been the stone that marked the pomerium of the primitive Quirinal city on that side.¹ At all events this part of the Capitol hill, including the depression between the two peaks, remained outside the *urbs* of the Four Regions, and consequently outside the early pomeria—supposing that there were pre-Servian pomeria. Are we to infer that when the pomerium was enlarged so as to include the Capitol it became impossible to perform the ritual of Vediovis in the Capitoline temple and that it was necessary to build a second temple on the Island outside the new pomerium? In this case the older temple would have been retained as a sacred place, as in other cases, but the real activities of the cult would have been transferred to the Island. Against this is the apparent contemporaneity of the two temples: we should have to suppose that L. Furius Purpureo who vowed the temple on the Island in 200 B. C. began it in 196 and dedicated it in 194, and who is said also to have built, a few years later, in 192, the temple on the Capitol,² was, in the latter case merely doing a work of reconstruction, as we may infer not only from Ovid but from a passage in Dionysius.³

¹ Roman Festivals, 326-7; cf. 230.

² The passages in Livy relating to the construction of these temples are corrupt and the name of Vediovis has been restored in both cases. The Island temple is referred to in XXXI 21. 12, and the Capitol temple in XXXV 41. 8.

³ Dionysius of Halicarnassus II 15 (cf. II 10, 3) in describing the founding of Rome speaks of the temple in the asylum as having been consecrated by Romulus and says that he cannot say to what god or genius it was dedicated.

The only hints as to the character of this cult are given in the passages that refer to the cult-statue of Vediovis in his temple on the Capitol, evidently of early character. Of it Pliny says (N. H. XVI, 216): Have we not the statue of Vediovis, made of cypress wood, still preserved in the Capitol, ever since its dedication in the year 561 of the city?¹ Ovid makes him beardless and Gellius presupposes this in comparing him with Apollo. Gellius speaks of the arrows which he holds, and Ovid calls attention to the fact that he does not hold a thunderbolt. Both writers tell us that the statue was accompanied by a goat.² Gellius adds that it was the custom

¹ Nonne simulacrum Veiovis in arce e cypresso durat a condita urbe DLXI dicatum? The numbers are uncertain and the DCXI of the MS has been amended to DLXI or DLX.

² The full texts of Ovid and Gellius may be quoted here:

Ovid, *Fasti* III 429: Una nota est Marti nonis sacrata quod illis
Templa putant lucos Vediovis ante duos
Romulus ut saxo lucum circumdedit alto,

435: Ne tamen ignaro novitas tibi nominis obstat
Disce, quis iste deus, curve vocetur ita.
Iuppiter est iuvenis. iuvenalis aspice voltus:
Aspice deinde, manu fulmina nulla tenet.
Fulmina post ausos caelum adfectare Gigantes
440: Sumpta Iovi. primo tempore inermis erat.

Stat quoque capra simul. nymphae pavissee fe-
runtur

Cretides, infanti lac dedit illa Iovi.
445: Nunc vocor ad nomen. vegrandia farra colonae
Quae male creverunt, vescaque parva vocant.
Vis ea si verbi est, cur non ego Vediovis aedem
Aedem non magni suspicer esse Iovis?

The passage in Gellius N. A. V, 12 begins by an interesting reference to early rituals with prayers to Vediovis: "In antiquis precationibus nomina haec deorum inesse animadvertimus; 'Diovis' et 'Vediovis': est autem etiam aedes Vediovis Romae inter arcem et Capitolium. . . . 'Iovem' Latini veteres a 'iuvando' appellavere . . . cum Iovem igitur et Diovem a iuvando nominassent, eum contra deum qui non iuvandi potestatem sed vim nocendi haberet . . . Vediovem appellaverunt, dempta atque detracta iuvandi facultate. 'Ve' enim particula . . . duplicem significatum . . . capit. Nam et augendae rei et minuendae valet . . . Simulacrum igitur dei Vediovis, quod est in aede de qua supra dixi, sagittas tenet, quae sunt videlicet partae ad nocendum. Quapropter

to sacrifice to Vediovis a goat according to a special ritual: *immolaturque ritu humano capra*.

For Ovid it was the goat Amalthea that fitted with his explanation of Vediovis as the boy-Jupiter. It is to be noticed that Ovid presupposes on the part of his readers absolute ignorance as to Vediovis and that even the name will be strange to them (*novitas nominis*). This agrees with the agnostic attitude of Dionysius of Halicarnassus already noted. It agrees also with the fact that Gellius says that Vediovis was quite commonly confused with Apollo because of the arrows in his hand. But it should be noticed that no bow is mentioned, and, as will appear later, the arrows are the symbols of the straight volcanic bolts—the subterranean lightnings. They are contrasted with the forked bolts of the sky lightnings of Jove. The assimilation to Apollo would be, of course, entirely to the destructive element of Apollo.

The connection of the goat with Vediovis is characteristic. It is well known that Greco-Roman mythology and ritual associated the goat with the underworld, especially with elemental heat. Wissowa has called attention to the perfectly logical *taboo* placed on the goat for the Flamen Dialis. Among the things that this priest of Jupiter was forbidden to touch beside a dog, raw meat, beans, ivy, wheat and leavened bread was a goat.¹ This appears only another indication that

eum deum plerumque Apollinem esse dixerunt; immolaturque ritu humano capra eiusque animalis figmentum iuxta simulacrum stat."

Wissowa (p. 296) speaks of the statue as holding *bow* and arrows, but there is no warrant for this in Gellius. The absence of any mention of a bow, both in Gellius and Ovid, favors the interpretation of the arrows as straight thunderbolts.

A coin of the gens Fonteia is considered by Babelon (Monn. de la républ. I 506 f.) as representing Vediovis; and there is a considerable group of republican family coins and bronze statuettes which represent a youthful beardless thunder-god. Thulin regards him as an Etruscan form of Jupiter, excluding in every case the ascription to Vediovis. What the young god is holding on these coins can readily be thought a straight thunderbolt such as the Etruscans considered the thunderbolt of Vediovis to be as we shall see. These coins will be referred to later.

¹Gellius X 15, 12: Plut. Quaest. Rom. III; cf. Fowler, Religious Experiences of the Roman people, p. 34, and Frazer, Golden Bough², I 241.

Jupiter and Vediovis and their cults were, so to speak, mutually exclusive.

The use of the Human Rite in connection with the sacrifice of the goat is interpreted by Wissowa (pp. 237-8) to refer not to an original human sacrifice for which a goat was substituted, but to a service for the dead.¹ It will appear later that while this is true, the peculiar function of Vediovis in later times of permitting souls to escape to life among the stars, places the act in the later historic period in a sort of intermediate position, partaking of both ideas. For, of course, the sacrifice *ritu humano* brought the animal so sacrificed into the category of *hostiae animales* or vicarious sacrifices in which the life only and not the body was dedicated to the god. It was said to be a doctrine of the *Disciplina Etrusca* that through this kind of sacrifice² souls could be in each case set free from the infernal regions and transformed into spirits and genii, that is into *di animales*. This appears to have been described in the *Libri Acheruntici*, which formed the last section of the *Disciplina Etrusca*³ and treated of life beyond the grave. In its earliest form, even, this connection of Vediovis with souls and the infernal regions cannot antedate the time of Etruscan influence and must be eliminated from any consideration of Vediovis as a Latin deity. If the goat was originally connected with him the association must then have been due to the idea of heat and fire.

Little attention seems to have been paid to the passage of Varro which makes of Vediovis a primitive Sabine god introduced into Rome at the beginning by Titus Tatius. Varro (LL. V 74) quotes from the *Annals* a list of the Sabine gods worshipped in primitive Rome: *arae Sabinum linguam olent; quae Tati regis voto sunt Romae dedicatae; nam, ut annales dicunt, vovit Opi, Florae, Vediovi, Saturnoque, Soli, Lunae, Vulcano et Summano, itemque Larundae, Termino, Quirino,*

¹ The analogy which he finds to the cult of Soranus on Mt. Soracte is valuable and confirms my volcanic connection, for there was undoubtedly a volcanic legend of primitive character connected with Soracte, even though the mountain itself was non-volcanic.

² Arnobius, II 62: *neque quod Etruria libris in Acheronticis pollicetur, certorum animalium sanguine numinibus certis dato divinas animas fieri et ab legibus mortalitatis educi.*

³ Thulin, *Die etruskische Disciplin*: cf. Serv. Aen. VIII 398.

Vortumno, Laribus, Dianae Lucinaeque. The source for such a list is probably not earlier than the third century B. C., and while of no particular value in proving a Sabine origin is an interesting confirmation of the primitive character of the god.

The association with the *di manes* is quite early. It appears in the formula of *devotio* already referred to. The usual formula of the early type seems to have been the offering of one's life on behalf of the Roman people to *Tellus* or *Terra Mater* and the *di manes*. This is the formula in Livy. But in another formula of less early origin, perhaps, a male chthonic deity is substituted for *Tellus* by the side of the *di manes*. This would seem to have been at first *Vediovis*. Then, with the introduction of Hellenic ideas, *Dis Pater* was added and the formula in Macrobius (III 9, 10) is *Dis Pater, Veiovis* and the *Manes*, which was the formula used by the Roman commander at the Siege of Carthage, showing the stage reached in the course of the second century B. C. It is probable that shortly after this *Vediovis* disappeared from the formulas, especially as *Pluto* was brought in on the Hellenistic wave to reinforce the Greek conceptions of the underworld.

Long after *Vediovis* had disappeared from the horizon of active Roman cults, at some time in fact under the empire, there came an archaistic revival of his cult, or rather of his personality, which finds expression in such writers as *Ammianus Marcellinus* and *Martianus Capella*. Such a recrudescence of an entirely obsolete divinity would be unintelligible and of no significance if it were not due to a certain particular cause. It is a peculiar fact, the importance of which has been well demonstrated by *Thulin*, that it was not until almost imperial times that the books forming the *Disciplina Etrusca* were translated into Latin and so made available beyond the small circle who knew the Etruscan language. The comparatively early Etruscan cycle of religious works with their ritual and divination formulas, handed down from a period hardly later than the sixth century B. C., were appropriated by late Roman writers in very much the same way as sculptors of the age of Augustus or Hadrian reproduced archaic works of Greek sculpture of the sixth and fifth centuries B. C. These Roman echoes of Etruria are all that we have; and while they are in form quite late, it is a fact that the hyper-idealism

of the Neo-Platonic, Gnostic and Mithraic age was far more in sympathy with the pan-naturalism of primitive thought than Roman thought had been at any time between the Punic wars and the age of the Antonines. The writers of the fourth century A. D. were, therefore, in a far better condition to understand the meaning of Vediovis than the writers of the Augustan age. It is in the two authors just mentioned that I find the clearest evidence of the volcanic character of Vediovis.

It is recognized that the Roman historian of the time of the Emperors Constantius and Julian, Ammianus Marcellinus, was a student of the Etrusca Disciplina in its Latin dress. He not only says so himself but proves it by giving a synopsis of some of its doctrines. Now, in describing the vicissitudes of an expedition sent from Gaul by Julian against Constantius in the East, under the command of Severus, his *magister equitum*, the historian speaks of a curious psychological phenomenon which he thinks could hardly be explained on natural grounds. This Severus, who had hitherto been a bold and active leader, turned suddenly timorous and supine (XVII 10, 2): "mortem fortasse metuens adventantem, ut in Tageticis libris legitur Veiovis fulmine mox tangendos adeo hebetari ut nec tonitrum nec maiores aliquos possint audire fragores". This fear of death connected with sudden deafness which afflicted those who were destined to be destroyed by an earthquake or eruption, or, as he puts it, by the *fulmen Veiovis*, which suddenly developed in Severus, is explained if one turns back a couple of pages in the text of Ammianus, and reads the excursus on the subject of earthquakes in which he indulges. Just at this time there were taking place terrible earthquakes over a wide area in Macedonia, Asia and Pontus. Many cities were ruined, and the detailed description which he gives of the destruction of Nicomedia (XVII 7, 1) has remained famous, to be placed beside Pliny's description of the destruction of Pompeii.¹

This leads Ammianus Marcellinus to refer to the ritual and pontifical books and to the ceremonies prescribed in them in connection with and for protection against such calamities. Among these ancient manuals were the Libri Tagetici of the Disciplina Etrusca, which he had consulted. Doubtless it was

¹ Cf. Ammian. Marc. XXXIII 5, 10.

in them that he found deafness and hebetude as symptoms of those destined to be struck by the *fulmen Veiovis*. It was not in a Roman source, for as we have seen the Romans had forgotten, five centuries before, their national beliefs of this sort and in this connection it is interesting to quote a passage of Varro (ap. Gell. II 28): Quoniam et qua vi et per quem deorum dearumque terra tremere incertum esset. On the other hand that the Etruscans, who are acknowledged to have derived their divination from Babylonia,¹ did actually possess such a manual is made quite certain not merely by the historic reliance in the Etruscan science of divination by thunder and lightning on the part of the Romans but from the fact that such a treatise on divination from earthquakes is actually known to have existed in Babylonia and Assyria and to have been translated in Greek, so that it was probably among the earliest Etruscan documentary assets.²

My interpretation of the *fulmen Veiovis*³ as the subterranean lightning of volcanic eruptions finds support in Pliny, Caecina (ap. Senecam) and Martianus Capella.

The Romans themselves were satisfied with regarding all day lightnings as from Jupiter and all night lightnings as from Summanus,⁴ apparently a nocturnal Jupiter. For any more particularized speculations they called upon the Etruscan experts. The Etruscan system required a division of the heavens for divination by thunder and lightning into sixteen

¹ See Jastrow, Religious Belief in Babylonia and Assyria, p. 195: cf. his Die Religion Babyloniens u. Assyriens, pp. 800, 320-321 and passim. Modestov, op. cit., p. 388.

² Bezold u. Boll, Reflexe astrolog. Keilschriften bei griechischen Schriftstellern (in Abhandl. Akad. Heidelberg, 1911): cf. Jastrow, Die Religion, etc.

³ The unfamiliarity with the name Vediovis, MS Vegonices, has caused some doubt as to the reading of the word in the MSS, but, as in the case of the two passages of Livy regarding the temples of Vediovis, the reading Vediovis may be accepted. Thulin refuses to accept the reading Vediovis and prefers Begois. In this he goes against Gelenius, Eyssenhardt and Bormann; see Arch. Epig. Mitth. aus Oest. 1887, XI, p. 100, and Thulin, Etr. Disc. I, Die Blitzlehre, pp. 4, 36.

⁴ Wissowa, 124, 472; Fowler, R. F., p. 160-161. The connection of Summanus with the manes and underworld, which Wissowa denies, is asserted by Martianus Capella (II 161) and confirmed by the black animals used in his sacrifices and by Arnobius V 37 and VI 3 whom Wissowa himself cites.

sections radiating from the centre, four in each of the four divisions made by the intersecting lines of *cardo* and *decumanus* S-N and E-W, and beginning at the north running east and south. The number is certified by Cicero and Pliny,¹ but it is in the extraordinary work of archaistic erudition of Martianus Capella that these sixteen divisions are described as to their spiritual content, beginning at the upper or north pole and working down from left to right. The auspicious omens occur in the first eight divisions, those of the left, the inauspicious originate in the right hand half; the very luckiest being near the north end on the left and the most unlucky near the same point on the right. It was, of course, understood that, in marking out this *templum*, the auspiciant faced the south and so had the east or source of fortune on his left.

In each of the sixteen divisions Martianus Capella² places presiding gods or spirits, according to a scheme which is generally granted to be of Etruscan origin. On the unlucky right or west side, in the Fifteenth section, next to the last, is the name Vediovis together with the *di publici*. The last, or Sixteenth section, is ruled by the god of darkness, Nocturnus, while on the other side of Vediovis, in section Fourteen, is Saturn, also exerting a dark and evil influence. Beyond, in Thirteen and Eleven, are the *di manes*, the underworld spirits.

By the presence of Vediovis in this scheme and by the company he keeps we are confirmed in the belief that Vediovis was both a thunder and lightning god and also that his sphere of action was infernal. Now Bouché-Leclercq considers these two characteristics irreconcilable. Thunder and lightning belong to the sky and it did not seem to him as if they could by any reasoning be connected with the infernal regions³: and yet he was obliged to recognize the coexistence of both characteristics in Vediovis. He was reduced to the suggestion that the *fulgura* of Vediovis might be those very low on the horizon! But as the horizon is certainly as much as any other a part of the sky this is no solution, and the difficulty itself seems not to have been met or even stated by any other writer.

¹ N. H. II 54, 142; cf. Cicero de div. II 18, 42.

² I, 15; cf. Nissen, Das Templum, 182 sqq., and Bouché-Leclercq, Hist. de la divin. IV, p. 23 sqq.

³ Hist. de la divin. IV, p. 36, n. 5.

The solution, however, is extremely simple. I found it in a study of the various classes of fulgurations catalogued by the Etruscans. The most detailed summaries of the Etruscan scheme are given by Pliny and Seneca. The latter statement ¹ is taken from Caecina's monograph on the subject which is based on the Etruscan system. Now Caecina gives eleven distinct categories of *fulgura*, and of these one is not celestial but infernal, coming up from the bowels of the earth: *inferna* (*fulgura*), *cum e terra exilivit ignis*. He is, of course, describing volcanic eruptions or emanations under a term that will include all varieties. Pliny also gives volcanic eruptions as a form of fulguration recognized in the Etruscan system.² His remarks on this part of the subject are more detailed than on any other and need quoting here because they also explain the arrows in the hand of the statue of Vediovis already alluded to. He says that those *fulgura* which the Etruscans call *infera* are the most frightful and destructive, coming not from the heavens but from the near-by and turbulent forces of nature. Their strokes do not fall obliquely, as do the celestial bolts, but straight, and are regarded as coming from the earth, *creduntur e terra exire*.

That the idea of a subterranean form of thunder and lightning was not peculiar to Etruria but was a familiar one to Greece can readily be proved, as, for instance, in Aeschylus, Prometheus 1103 sqq., βρυχία δ' ἡχὼ παραμυκᾷται | βροντῆς, ἔλικες δ' ἐκλάμπουσι | στεροπῆς ζάπυροι, κ. τ. λ.

It may then be taken for granted that infernal fulguration formed an intrinsic and important part of Etruscan divina-

¹ Q. Nat. II 49.

² N. H. II 138: Tuscorum litterae novem deos emittere fulmina existimant, eaque esse undecim generum; Iovem enim trina iaculari. Romani duo tantum ex iis servavere, diurna attribuentes Iovi, nocturna Summano, rariora sane eadem de causa frigidioris caeli. Etruria erumpere terra quoque arbitratur, quae infera appellat, brumali tempore facta saeva maxime et exsecrabilia, cum sint omnia, quae terrena existimant, non illa generalia nec a sideribus venientia, sed ex proxima atque turbidiore natura. Argumentum evidens, quod omnia superiora e caelo decidentia obliquos habent ictus, haec autem, quae vocant terrena, rectos. Et quae ex propiore materia cadunt, ideo creduntur e terra exire, quoniam ex repulsu nulla vestigia edunt, cum sit illa ratio non inferi ictus, sed adversi. For earthquake thunder see the *Vita* of Gallienus, § 5, and Gordian, § 26. Ceres and Persephone were invoked after them: Obseq. 43. 46.

tion; and that while celestial fulguration could be both lucky and unlucky, this infernal fulguration was unmitigatedly evil.¹

The personification of this natural force among the Etruscans as well as among the Italic peoples was undoubtedly Vediovis. His relation to Jupiter, as presiding over a corresponding yet radically different mode of action is now clear. The undisciplined violence of this action is well rendered by the prefix *ve* in one of its meanings. Though his source of energy is distinct from Jupiter's,—one the heaven and the other the underworld,—their field of operation coincides.

There is in the museum of the Antiquarium Comunale at Rome what seems to be a representation of Vediovis.² It is reproduced in Pais, *Ancient Legends*, p. 166, under the caption "A Roman deity". The figure occupies the centre of the gable of some small monument. The upper part is half-man and half-bird, while the lower half is in the form of a double coiled serpent. The head is that of an old bearded man, and from his shoulders stand out two large wings. In his right hand he holds a thunderbolt of three straight bolts and his left hand is raised. There could hardly be imagined a better way for Roman Art under Etruscan influence to figure Vediovis. The serpent represents his fundamentally chthonic nature; the straight thunderbolts the subterranean fulgurations; the wings and feathers the aerial flight of the volcanic matter.

It is mainly due to the keen perception of Babelon that Vediovis has been recognized on a number of Roman family coins of the late Republic, not in the doubtful bearded form of the relief just described, but in the guise of a beardless youth such as the descriptions of the cult statue of Vediovis in Ovid and Gellius would lead us to expect. First of all is a coin of the gens *Iulia* of 88 B. C., issued by L. Julius Bursio.³ It should be placed at the head of the series because the *Bovillae* inscription shows that the gens *Iulia* was addicted to the cult of Vediovis. The youthful head has curly hair and a laurel wreath, with *Hermes* wings at the temples. On the reverse a Cupid is trying to break over his knees a bundle of arrows in

¹ See Ammianus Marcellinus, loc. cit.

² Helbig's *Führer* does not mention it.

³ Babelon, *Monnaies de la rép. rom.* II 6-8.

the form of thunderbolts—probably a form of *taboo* to prevent harm from volcanic eruption. The wings are natural in a god of aerial activities. In regard to the laurel wreath it is interesting to note¹ that according to Etruscan and Roman tradition the laurel tree cannot be struck by lightning, so that it is natural it should be consecrated to Vediovis, who was probably regarded as its co-protector with Jupiter.

Perhaps to the same year (88 B. C.) belongs another important Vediovis coin, that of M. Fonteius C. f.,² already recognized by Müller-Wernicke as a Vediovis. This is even more convincing than the Julian coin because besides the lightning under the head on the obverse, the reverse is occupied by the youthful genius of Vediovis on a goat, with the bolt repeated underneath. In some cases there is an interesting connection with the Dioscuri and the Lares of Rome, represented either by their caps or their full-seated figures. An interesting coin of the gens Caesia, of slightly earlier date, gives Vediovis on the obverse as a bust, seen almost from the back and turning to the left. He is in the act of launching a handful of arrows—the straight lightning bolts. The two seated Lares with their dog occupy the reverse (Babelon I, 281). Probably this act of launching the bolts is a reproduction of the cult statue. The same type and the same act is repeated in a coin of the gens Licinia, issued c. 82 B. C. by C. Licinius Macer (Babelon, II 133). The launching is done by drawing the right hand back sharply above the shoulder.³

If, on the one hand, the Etruscan, Sabine and Latin connections of Vediovis might lead us to consider him a generic Italiot divinity; on the other hand, his volcanic character

¹ Thulin, art. Haruspices in Pauly-Wissowa², p. 2448 with a reference to Pliny, N. H. II 146, XV 153.

² Cohen, *Med. Cons.* pl. 18, 5; Babelon, *ibid.*, I 506 sqq.; 507, 10; Müller-Wernicke, *Ant. Denkm.*, pl. V. 15; p. 60: "Die Vorderseite zeigt den lockigen, bartlosen Kopf des lorberbekränzten Veiovis . . . Unter dem Kopfe der Blitz. Auf der Rückseite erblickt man in einem Lorberkranze den Genius des Veiovis als geflügelten Knaben auf einer Ziege nach rechts reitend; unterhalb wieder den Blitz".

³ Other types of Vediovis appear on coins of the gens Ogulnia (Babelon II 266) and of the gens Gargilia, previous to 81 B. C. (Babelon I 532), though these are not as convincingly identified. It is a question whether the deity in a quadriga launching the thunderbolt on the reverse of the Ogulnia coin is a Vediovis or a Jupiter.

would restrict the area of his cult to the sections of Italy where volcanic action was feared, during the period approximately between 1000 and 600 B. C., that is, South Etruria, Latium, Campania and their vicinity. The weakening of volcanic action in historic times, except in a very few centres, accounts for the early obscurity or obliteration of the cult, which lasted longest in the Alban neighborhood.

It would seem as if there were not one of the facts connected with the god and his cult that does not harmonize with the volcanic theory. More than this, no other theory explains them all as it does.

Beginning as a god of certain early tribes such as the Latins and Sabines, he was adopted by the Etruscans and given a place in their system of divination. To them are probably due certain developments in the evolution of his cult. In his primitive form he must be thought of as an earth deity and not as an underworld deity in the Hellenic sense. It has been well said that the primitive Italians cared and thought very little about the underworld. He was chthonic like Terra Mater, only more subterranean in that he had no normal contact with the earth's surface. When the cycle of Underworld gods was brought into Roman religious thought by Greek influence, one quite sees how, in a spirit of fun, a Roman wit could create a new class of middle gods, *di medioximi*,¹ the earth-gods that the old Romans loved, half-way between the sky-gods and the new gods of the underworld ruled by Dis and Persephone. In this shifting of cosmic scenery it was natural that Vediovis should be juggled into the underworld, as we have seen, and should be associated or confounded with Dis-Pluto. In this connection I must discuss somewhat at length a curious late attempt to galvanize the Vediovis cult. It has but little connection with my theory except as an instance of the infiltration of combined

¹ Wissowa¹, 33 A. 5; 188 A. 8: Plautus, Cist. 572, at ita me di deaque superi atque inferi et medioximi. But was it just a joke with Plautus? When Serv. Aen. III 134 says: quidam aras superiorum deorum volunt esse, medioximorum id est marinorum focos, inferiorum vero mundos, he seems to refer in a twisted fashion to what was perhaps a transitory but real distinction before the supremacy of the Hellenic underworld had become thoroughly established.

Hellenic and late Oriental ideas into a primitive Etrusco-Roman substratum.

I find the clearest trace of this archaistic revival in a passage of Martianus Capella, whose chart of the heavenly templum shows him, as we have seen, to have been acquainted with the place of Vediovis in the Etruscan fulgural system. He makes his principal allegorical impersonation, Philology, obtain immortality through a magic brew and not by anyone of the several more or less magical methods advocated by different Eastern and Western systems. The first of these methods to which he refers is the Etruscan, which makes the soul escape by means of Vedius or Vediovis. But Philology is not to pass through his hands: *quod nec Vedium cum uxore conspexerit sicut suadet Etruria* (II 142). Exactly what rôle Vedius plays in Martianus Capella appears further in the text where, after discussing Pluto as Summanus and the various classes of infernal spirits such as the Manes, Lemures, Larvae and Maniae, he describes the disturbed region of fiery Phlegethon in Hades where the conflicting currents of heat and dampness produce a condition of continual noise and disturbance, a region of suffering through which souls restlessly flit. This region of Pyriphlegethon is presided over by Vedius also called Dis or Veiovis.¹ One is at once reminded of Pliny's description of the violent interaction of compressed hot and cold air as the condition producing earthquakes;² of the name Φλέγρας πεδίον given to the volcanic plain of Campania, and of the various fulgural and volcanic connections of the root φλέγω and its derivatives.

¹ Martian. Cap. II 40-41 (166) Circa ipsum vero terrae circulum aer ex calore supero atque exhalatu madoreque infero turbidatus egredientes corporibus animas quodam fluenti aestu collidens non facile patitur evolare. Hincque tractum Pyriphlegethonta sollertia poeticae adumbrationis allusit atque in eo perenni strepitu volutata colliditur animarum, quas Vedius adiudicavit, impietas (id est <Pluton) quem etiam Ditem Veiovemque dixere. Ipsam quoque terram qua hominibus invia est, etc. The volcanic connection is employed in Plato's *Phaedo*, p. 113 B. Cf. *Odyssey* X 513, *Vergil Aen.* VI 550 ff. See Lucian's *κατάπλους*, ch. 28, and for a bath in the Pyriphlegethon, the *Dialogues of the Dead*, ch. 30.

² Pliny II 81 says that the trembling of the earth resembles thunder in the clouds and the yawning of the earth (in volcanic eruption) is like bursts of lightning.

The section of the infernal regions then, over which Vediovis presided, according to this account in Martianus Capella was the *Pyriphlegethon*, or region where earthquakes and eruptions were produced, and throughout which souls were balloted back and forth on conflicting currents. What is not clear is how far the sphere and character of Vediovis was expanded to amalgamate with the Hellenic concept of Dis-Pluton, and how far it can be ascribed in the form here given to it to an Etruscan source.

Does this also help to define the relation of Vediovis to the *hostiae animales*, to the sacrifice of the goat *ritu humano*, and to the somewhat late concept of the escape of souls from probation or torment to the abode of the blessed?

It seems implied in Martianus Capella that according to the Etruscan system the souls passed out by means or by permission of Vediovis. The passing back and forth of souls was a familiar idea in various forms of palingenesis, reincarnation, temporary visitations to the world of mortals by the manes, lemures and other spirits. In the Aeneid (VI 685) Vergil has voiced the current conception as to the form in which souls were even then, and more commonly in later times,¹ supposed to pass out and upward as pure atoms of the original fiery energy or aether, of the active force of fire. This is in harmony with the ideas of Stoicism and astrology as to the origin of souls from the mass of fiery aether and with the vivid fancies of Plato. The expulsion of souls in the form of fiery atoms, through openings violently made in the earth's crust by the agency of the volcanic god Vediovis, is therefore a method thoroughly in harmony with all that we know of ancient thought.

But while recognizing this we must guard against two things: (1) against ascribing to the original Vediovis or even to the Etrusco-Roman Vediovis any of the later anthropomorphic and infernal ideas connected with the Dis-Pluto cult introduced by Hellenism: (2) against doing the same for ideas connected with life in and beyond the stars which were

¹ Serv. Aen. IV 56 and III 231: a lost work by Labeo was entitled *De Diis animalibus*; cf. Macrob. III 5, 1-4, with reference to a work by Trebatius, in which the second species of *hostia* is that in quo sola anima deo sacrat, unde etiam haruspices animales has *hostias vocant*.

an even later introduction of the post-Alexandrian and imperial ages, though current long before then in Oriental and Hellenic spheres.

In other words it must be recognized that while there was in early Italic-Etruscan religion a strong element of doctrine as to life beyond the grave, represented in the *Libri Acheruntici*, and that, in view of the derivation of Etruscan ideas from Babylon this doctrine may have had a sidereal aspect; still, it is clear that scepticism and Hellenism had almost obliterated such early beliefs, until they were revived in more philosophical, elaborate and extreme forms, in the late Republic and the empire, and finally remodelled by belated scholarship through a study of Etruscan documents.

All that can be safely predicated of the post-Etruscan concept of Vediovis in so far as it related to life after death, is that he is thought to preside over the passing out of souls in the form of fiery atoms from a place of torment to one of bliss and immortality, wherever that may have been, and that this act could be brought about by the vicarious sacrifice of a goat *ritu humano*, on behalf of the dead person. At the same time the connection of the goat with Vediovis was probably much earlier than any such association of ideas and goes back to a fairly early Italico-Etruscan ritual.

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